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among men), occasional *internecine struggle* (much oftener assumed than observed), and so on,—all the seamy side,—I, though with no temperamental optimism, cannot help being most impressed by the definiteness, the selectiveness, the order, the beauty, the progressiveness of Nature. I see no harlot, but the mother of us all.

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THE MEANING AND ORIGIN OF SOCIETIES.—NOTES OF SOME RECENT
SOCIOLOGICAL DISCUSSION.

HAVING been recently engaged in certain fundamental political inquiries, and having found myself conducted to the conception of a number of men making up a unity or whole, a social body or society, as a prerequisite of political formations,—a conception the investigation of which, however, might be said to belong to sociology rather than to specific political science,—I have looked with interest upon whatever treatment of the subject I might find in such recent sociological literature as I was able to get hold of.

I.

As it happens, some valuable discussion has been going on as to what is (or, shall we say? shall be) the precise meaning of sociology.* Involved in this question and, I should suppose, lying at the root of it, is the question as to what “society” itself means. For it goes without saying, I imagine, that sociology is the science of society,—this whatever its more exact definition, whatever methods it is to pursue, or whatever be its final purpose. But what is society? In one sense the answer can only come at the end of extended special investigation. But in another sense we must have a notion of what the word means before we can even know what we are to investigate. We must have some idea, however general, associated with a word before we can profitably use it at all. It does not help matters much that we are all using the word, when we may mean different things by it. I trust that it may be of interest to others, as it has surely been to me, to learn something

* If any one wishes to see what need there is of discussion of this sort before any edifying use of the term can be made, he should read the jumble of opinions gathered into an article, “What is Sociology?” in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, July, 1895. Unhappily, the editor, at whose solicitation the opinions were given and who comments at length upon them, seems to be more or less confused himself.

of the sense in which a few recent sociological writers use this fundamental term of their science.

I have remarked on the vagueness with which the authors of "An Introduction to the Study of Society" use the word in a review of their work elsewhere in this JOURNAL. Once they tell us, "Society is a complex of activities and movements originated by the energy of those physical and psychical attributes which determine human motives" (p. 55), though this is hardly meant as a definition. Again they say, "The reactions which result from voluntary or involuntary *contact** of human beings with other human beings are the phenomena peculiarly social as distinguished from the phenomena belonging properly to Biology and Psychology" (p. 60). But "contact" is still rather a vague word, as the authors seem themselves to feel. More definitely they go on to say,—

"There remain unique classes of social facts which we may distinguish, in general, as facts of co-operation. When men find themselves in proximity to other men, they instinctively attempt to adjust themselves to necessities or advantages which the association involves or permits. *The activities properly called social* may be said to consist of acquiescence in the requirements of physical and psychical contact between human beings, and appropriation of the opportunities of such contact between human beings. In calling attention specifically to *man as a co-operating animal*, the reference is to those social facts which arise when men begin to take conscious account of each other, *in attack and defense*, purchase and sale, *mastery and obedience*, emulation, rivalry, organization, authority, persuasion, *assent and dissent*, with all further relations involving volitional combinations of man and man" (p. 61).

An advance is made here, but there is still apparently some confusion. "Co-operation" is plain, and would seem to come very near what we ordinarily have in mind when we speak of one being standing to another in a *social* relation. But what sort of co-operation is that in which beings attack one another or defend themselves against one another, or in which one masters others and compels them to obey him without regard to their own good? These are indeed phenomena of contact, but are they of social contact? We should hardly speak of man-eating apes as making a society with their victims, though they were in unquestionable contact with them; and I see not how the phenomenon becomes any more social when it is between beings of the same kind,—

* The italics in these notes are mine, save where otherwise indicated.

that is, when both are, for example, human beings. Cannibalism may properly be examined as a primitive custom, but it would be rather grim to characterize it as a *social* phenomenon.

The authors of "An Introduction to the Study of Society" appear to have a sense of the inadequacy of these definitions (or descriptions); in any case, they at least imply in other passages much clearer and more definite notions. For example, social aggregates (as distinguished from organs) are described as being "held together in certain relations by various *bonds of common interest*" (p. 203). The positive problem of social welfare is thus formulated: "How shall the society of competent and willing men co-operate to the largest individual and social advantage?" (p. 80) and a perfect society is by implication regarded as a "fellowship of reciprocally helpful co-operation" (p. 82). In such suggestions a tolerably definite conception of social phenomena as phenomena of co-operation and mutual help seems to be contained. The authors once make a noble statement of this social idea: "The proper task of society . . . is such perfection of social fellowship that each individual capable of a social service shall contribute that service to social welfare, and in return shall have the amplest assistance from society in the realization of his manhood" (p. 79).

It is gratifying to find two such distinguished thinkers as Professor S. N. Patten and Professor F. H. Giddings agreeing substantially in a conception of the meaning of "social" similar to that just mentioned. In speaking of what I may call the looser and stricter senses of the word "sociology," Professor Patten says,—

"In the one sense, sociology treats of the phenomena due to the occupation of a common environment by several individuals,—the phenomena of mere contact in a physical environment. In the other sense, sociology treats of the phenomena resulting from certain subjective feelings which bind men together. In the first sense, hostile men or a beast and its prey are parts of one society and 'associate' with one another. In the second sense, only friendly bonds create a society. It is a relation existing between a number of similar beings united for common ends. The one is the phenomena of hostile contact, the other that of friendly contact. Professor Giddings calls both these classes of phenomena 'social,' and treats them as though they were co-ordinate phenomena belonging to one science. Evolution of 'the good old way' of survival through conflict is grouped together with that secured through such bonds as those which bind a mother to her child."*

* *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, January, 1895, p. 118.

Though he does not say so, it is evident here, and is indicated in so many words elsewhere, that the phenomena of "friendly contact," of "union," of co-operation are, in Professor Patten's judgment, those which are properly called "social," and that it is only they that give rise to "a true society." Professor Giddings alleges that Professor Patten misunderstands him in the above quotation, and, on the point now under consideration, he reaffirms Professor Patten's essential conception. His words are:

"Dr. Patten is mistaken in thinking that I would call the hostile contact of a beast and its prey 'association,' or regard creatures of different species as parts of one society, or group such phenomena together with the bonds that unite the mother to her child; and it is this misapprehension which leads him to say that my thoughts would give to the words 'social' and 'association' 'a new meaning opposed to all usage,' and so 'confuse two concepts which must be kept distinct.' I have never thought or spoken of mere physical contact, hostile or friendly, as constituting association or a society. It is association *if*, and *only if*, accompanied by a consciousness on the part of each of the creatures implicated that the creatures with which it comes in contact are like itself. This consciousness of kind is the elementary, the genuine social fact; it is sympathy, fellow-feeling in the literal as distinguished from the popular sense of the word." * (The italics here are Professor Giddings').

On the other hand, I find Dr. G. Simmel, in a notable article on "The Problem of Sociology," contributed to the *Revue de Metaphysique et de Morale* for September, 1894, somewhat uncertain in his conceptions on the subject. Dr. Simmel holds that sociology should include in its consideration all the forms of relation between men,—not only associations in the strict sense (in the sense of co-operation and harmonious unification), but also combat and competition ("la lutte et la concurrence"), since these, too, establish, or rather are, relations, reciprocal reactions, and show, despite the difference in cases, a likeness of forms and evolutions (p. 502, n). At the same time he says that sociology properly so-called studies "exclusively that which is specifically social, the form and the forms of association as such" (p. 499). Moreover, he speaks of "the particular causes and ends without which naturally there is no association" (p. 499), apparently suggesting thereby the idea of common interests. What sort of an association can be said to be constituted by combat? Combat is indeed a case of

* *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, March, 1895, p. 98.

"reciprocal reaction," but what does this show save that "reciprocal reaction" is altogether too vague to serve as a mark of distinctively social phenomena? One may quite sympathize with the drift of Dr. Simmel's remarks (namely, that sociology, if it is to be a special science and not an *omnium gatherum* of information about society in general, must isolate the distinctively social in human phenomena, study the form of association as such, leaving the contents to be treated by the special historical and material sciences,* and even restrict itself to what *comes about by society*, as distinguished from what *merely happens in society*), and yet feel a lack of precision in his manner of dealing with this fundamental conception.

But, after all, it may be said, the phenomena of hostility, combat, and war surely belong to human society, and in this way must come within the scope of a sociology which is the science of society. "Human society," however, in the sense just used is too vague a thing to serve as the subject-matter of a new and distinct science. Society, so far as it lends itself to treatment by such a science, must be understood as equivalent to societies (or as an abstract term for what they have in common). It means families, tribes, clans, communities, nations, or the general type of social relationship exemplified by them. Sociology may, of course, consider the phenomena of combat and war as taking place *between* societies, and as having great and perhaps decisive effect upon the fortunes of societies, but not as themselves social phenomena. In the same way it may consider combat between individuals in the same society, and may trace its effects in weakening or perhaps undoing the societies, but cannot class it as itself a *social* fact. Professor Small attempts to meet the difficulty by inventing a new word, "societary," which shall cover what we may call the unsocial phenomena among men, as well as the contrasted phenomena. He says, "Whether we assume or not that sympathetic feelings are characteristic of societies as such, we have to deal with societies in conditions in which the spirit of hostility is more demonstrative than the spirit of co-operation. We obviously

* Cf. the drift of Professor Giddings's language: "Sociology therefore may be defined as the science of social elements and first principles. It is not the inclusive, but the fundamental social science. It is not the sum of the social sciences, but the groundwork, in which they find a common basis."—"The Theory of Sociology," p. 18.

need, then, a word plainly appropriate to the phenomena of societies as such without prejudgment of the content or quality of the phenomena. We have the word already made. Whatever is *of or pertaining to society* is "societary."* (Italics are Professor Small's.) But he forgets that, so far as societies have more of the spirit of hostility in them than of the spirit of co-operation, they are to this extent not really societies, but simply individuals juxtaposed. To speak of "the phenomena of *societies as such*, without prejudgment of the content or quality of the phenomena," is to admit that mere juxtaposition constitutes society, and thus to empty the word of any distinctive significance. Why, I may ask, is it not enough to consider the phenomena of hostility (so far as they are between individuals in the same society) as simply marks of the imperfection of the development of the society, or (so far as the conflict is between societies) as simply indicative of the failure as yet of the several societies to become component and co-operative parts of the one greater society, which shall include the human race? In this way it is equally possible to take account of the facts and yet not to introduce confusion into our fundamental ideas.†

II.

Another interesting subject of speculation in some of the articles above referred to is as to the forces that ultimately produce social phenomena. On this point, Professor Patten and Professor Giddings (in the course of an argument as to the logical priority of economics and sociology, which of itself need not detain us) appear to take somewhat different views. Professor Patten says,—

"The social feelings are but a developed type of a large class of feelings due to the love of means by which ends are attained. The hunter loves his dog

* *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, May, 1895, pp. 123-4. Professor Small, in speaking of the discussion between Professor Patten and Professor Giddings already referred to, appears to be mistaken in saying that "Professor Giddings is attempting to vindicate the claims of a science which deals with phenomena embracing all the variations of hostility as well as of fraternity" (p. 121). *Vide supra.*

† Cf. Carlyle's language: "We call it a society, and go about proposing openly the totalest separation and isolation. Our life is not a mutual helpfulness; but rather, cloaked under due laws-of-war, named competition and so forth, it is a mutual hostility." Here there is no confusion between the facts and the idea,—this, whether the facts are somewhat one-sidedly stated or not.

and gun, the herder his cattle, the mechanic his tools, the farmer his lands, the merchant his business, and the lawyer his profession. Animals love their master or the persons who feed them; they even have an affection for the place and time which are associated in their minds with the presence of those on whom they depend. There is therefore nothing peculiar about the rise of social feelings as soon as beings are placed in a position where they must resort to indirect methods to satisfy their wants.”*

In a similar way, Mr. Herbert Spencer sees men leaving the state of nature and submitting to political subordination “through experience of the increased satisfaction derived under it.”† Society, so viewed, is not a simple primitive fact, but a means to an end, an expedient, the advantages of which are experimentally learned and the pleasures connected with which arise by association.

On the other hand, Professor Giddings holds that “the beginnings of the social feelings and of social actions are as primitive as the beginnings of individual instincts.”‡ More particularly, and as marking clearly the issue, he says,—

“The issue then narrows down to this: Is a consciously hostile conflict for food, among creatures of like kind (a conflict so consciously carried on that it can result in the discrimination of degrees of utility), antecedent to a consciousness of identity or likeness of kind and its accompanying phenomena of imitation; or is the recognition of kind the earlier and more elementary phenomenon? This question goes to the very root of the subject. Upon it must divide those who hold by the doctrine of Hobbes, that rampant individualism and remorseless conflict preceded all society and all social instincts, from those who believe that the germs, at least, of fellow feeling, of social instinct, and of association, are as old and evolutionarily as primitive as the individual, and that from the first they have contributed to the psychic development of the individual.”§

Professor Patten is thoroughgoing in the view above stated. He, indeed, objects to Professor Giddings defining society “as though its only characteristic was the phenomenon of imitation,” and does not admit the issue in exactly the form which Professor Giddings, as just quoted, has given it. But he reaffirms that “the

* *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, January, 1895, p. 121.

† This is said, it should be noted, of *political* society; as to society, or rather the social impulse, in and of itself, however, Mr. Spencer apparently holds that is as original as the impulse of self-preservation. Cf. “Data of Ethics,” § 75.

‡ *Annals, etc.*, March, 1895, p. 101.

§ *Ibid.*, pp. 100, 101.

instincts which lead to conflict [even among those of the same kind] are older than the social instincts."* He thinks that beings of like kind may become hostile to one another now as soon as they are "conscious of an opposition of interests."† Let me endeavor to give a brief statement of the historical order of development as maintained by Professor Patten.

We start with beings capable of pleasure and pain. They may evolve in either of two ways,—by becoming adapted to their local environment, each for itself and by means of a competitive struggle, or, if the local environment is not sufficiently favorable, by unitedly appropriating the benefits of a wider environment. In the former case, progress is secured by the increasing perfection of the individual organism, in the latter by the development of social impulses and habits. All depends on the character of the environment or, more specifically, the peculiarities of the earth's crust, as to which way will be taken. If, owing to the conformation of the earth, nothing is to be gained by trying to make use of a more extended surface, the social impulses will not arise, or at least attain any development. To quote Professor Patten's own words,—

"The crust of the earth to which society must adjust itself must be so constituted that an ever-increasing advantage is secured by enlarging the environment of society, and thus securing more points of contact with the surface of the earth. *Without these conditions, social progress would be undesirable.* It would be better to strengthen the individual in functional activity and desire through greater local adjustments."‡

In such circumstances social impulses would remain "mere adumbrations."

Under contrasted circumstances, however, they not only arise, but in time create a social fabric of laws, institutions, customs, and ideals,—which relatively to the individual makes another environment that has equally to be considered with the primary objective environment, since only by harmony with it can adjustment to the objective environment be accomplished and the goods of the latter be appropriated. Under an evolution of this sort, the individual organism may not be so highly developed, and single pleasures may not be so keen, but on the whole the lot of

* *Annals, etc.*, May, 1895, p. 117.

† *Ibid.*, p. 119.

‡ *The Failure of Biologic Sociology* (No. 121 of Publications of the American Academy of Political and Social Science), p. 88.

the individual is improved (Would it not be more accurate to say that the lot of the mass is improved, though not of certain single individuals? Professor Patten's language is, "In this process there is perhaps a loss of function and of the intensity of individual desires, but the harmonious blending of the many products secured from the general environment creates for the individual a better consumption than any local environment could afford."*) According to such a view, societies become an economic expedient or necessity in certain defined circumstances, just as indeed, under other circumstances, a highly developed organic mechanism may be so regarded; or, to put it differently, sociology and biology alike "rest upon economics as an underlying science, and are [deal with] particular means of increasing utilities and goods."†

In another connection, Professor Patten gives a somewhat different and yet not inconsistent account of the matter. After saying that there are at present organisms without social instincts (*e.g.*, the cobras), and that "it is easy to see how millions of generations could have passed away before organisms began to associate for common ends and learn of each other through suggestion and imitation," he asks, How do hostile individuals "conclude to become social"? I cannot do better than quote his answer in full:

"The answer to this question is not difficult if we look for a solution among those objective conditions that determine a progressive evolution. The objects that are goods to each species are unequally distributed throughout the environment. The stronger animals of each species secure for themselves the localities where these goods are most abundant. The weaker animals are forced thereby into unfavorable localities where their food is scarce. They must, therefore, resort to new means to secure it or perish. They find this means in co-operation, and thus new relations grow up between them that are absent from the stronger animals which occupy the better localities where individual exertion can secure the needed food. Social bonds at first arise, not among the victors, but among the vanquished. They are the means by which the vanquished outwit their conquerors."‡

* *The Failure of Biologic Sociology*, (No. 121 of Publications of the American Academy of Political and Social Science), p. 83.

† *Ibid.*, p. 90.

‡ *Annals, etc.*, January, 1895, p. 120. Professor Patten says, "The earlier organisms, living when the struggle for existence was not so fierce, could have prospered without any social bonds." It is but turning this into the language of every day when Mr. W. L. Sheldon says, "If we were all happy, and the world went easy with us, if we could have had our way and none of us ever had to endure pain or struggle, there would be little or no fellowship in the world."

Thus again—and in a manner perhaps more readily intelligible than that above indicated—society appears as a device for individual ends. The further process of the same sort of evolution is also hinted at by Professor Patten. The weaker members of a species who unite and form a society in the manner described become thereby so strong that they may in time succeed in displacing the superior individuals who had laid hold of the better portions of the environment. “However powerful,” says Professor Patten, “an isolated being may be, he cannot withstand the encroachments of a group of weaker but united beings.”* Hence the isolated individuals of superior gifts are compelled themselves to become social, and the process of forming societies, once started, goes on. To quote Professor Patten’s pregnant summary, “When, therefore, social feelings appear in any group, they force the growth of social feelings in all the groups with which they come in contact. The power of surviving lies with the more compactly united social groups.”†

Social relationships are thus only somewhat accidental to man, according to Professor Patten. Under readily conceivable circumstances they would not arise at all. Such a view requires a pretty radical revision of the Aristotelian dictum that “man is, by nature, a political animal” (*Politics*, i. 2). I had myself been led to minimize such a claim to the extent of substituting “social” for “political” (government turning out to be an expedient rather

Again, “It is the awful struggle for existence which makes fellow-feeling and fellowship. Far back in history, when it was one terrific struggle for the human race to keep alive, then it was that the feeling of brotherhood began. Shoulder to shoulder man had to move on in trial, pain, and difficulty, in order to preserve existence. It was in such struggle that fellow-feeling or altruism had its origin.” —*Ethical Addresses*, May, 1895, p. 96.

Professor Patten elsewhere observes, however, that “a period of plenty destroys the opposition between individuals and tends to develop social relations” (*Annals, etc.*, May, 1895, p. 120), and I notice that the Italian criminologist, Professor Enrico Ferri, in his recent work, “Socialismus und Moderne Wissenschaft” (translated from the Italian by Dr. Hans Kurella, Leipzig, 1895), remarks to the same effect. (“Das Leben einzelner Individuen, Gruppen von Individuen und ganzen Gemeinschaften lässt stets erkennen, dass wenn die Nahrung, die Materielle Grundlage des Daseins, gesichert ist, das Gesetz der Interessengemeinschaft über das der Konkurrenz und des Kampfes dominiert, und umgekehrt.”—S. 37.) Just how to reconcile the varying points of view I do not for the moment see.

* *Annals, etc.*, January, 1895, p. 122.

† *Ibid.*

than an organic necessity to man); but if Professor Patten is correct, we cannot even say that *society* is organic to man's nature,—it is a shift no less than the state.*

All this is very different from Professor Giddings's contention, that "the germs, at least, of fellow-feeling, of social instinct, and of association are as old and evolutionally as primitive as the individual, and that from the first they have contributed to the psychic development of the individual." And yet, practically, I cannot make out that Professor Giddings differs widely from Professor Patten. He says, for instance :

"The struggle for food discloses the fact that creatures of the same kind or species are usually too nearly equal in strength and skill for any large number of them to depend habitually on conquests over their fellows for subsistence. They are forced to tolerate each other and to convert their struggle against one another into a war on lesser creatures."†

After all, then, social relations would seem to be a fruit of experience rather than the result of original instincts. The passage suggests, I may say by the way, a third manner of accounting for the rise of social phenomena, but my motive in quoting it is to show that Professor Giddings himself apparently supposes that a more or less individualistic struggle preceded social co-operation. So he seems, following the course of further evolution, to regard negative co-operation as coming first and as being "succeeded" by alliance, or positive co-operation.‡ It may, of course, be that Professor Giddings is representing a logical rather than an historical order of development, but his language does not make this clear. Moreover, he says (with a comparatively late stage of social progress in mind), "Conscious that their social relations are their most important means of defence, succor, pleasure, and development, individuals endeavor to conserve and perfect them."§ But if from utilitarian motives individuals may endeavor to conserve and per-

* Professor Huxley observes that progress in general in the living world is more or less accidental. "At the same time it has been shown that certain forms persist with very little change from the oldest to the newest fossiliferous formations; and thus show that progressive development is a contingent, and not a necessary, result of the nature of living matter."—"Collected Essays," Vol. i, p. 126.

† "The Theory of Sociology," p. 29.

‡ Ibid., p. 30.

§ Ibid., p. 35.

fect a thing, why may they not from the same motives have substantially originated it?*

As to the contrasted views of the origin of social phenomena (views which, it must be admitted, are more or less speculative in character),† I am only concerned now to state them, and do not venture to give an opinion of my own.

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FREE-WILL AND RESPONSIBILITY.

My reply to Dr. Hyslop's criticisms (in the October number of this JOURNAL) can only be a very short one; for otherwise I should simply have to repeat all that I endeavored to make clear in my article in the July number. And I will ask any readers of Dr. Hyslop's criticisms, who care to know my position, to look again at what I said in that article. Dr. Hyslop complains that I "naïvely assume an antithesis between the free-will doctrine and the necessitarian doctrine." If by this is meant that I think there is ultimately an inevitable antinomy, I am somewhat astonished at the remark; for the main purpose of my article was to show that there is no contradiction between the element of truth which, in my view, is contained in the traditional free-will doctrine and a carefully-stated doctrine of psychological necessitarianism. That there is an antithesis between the free-will doctrine as usually asserted and the necessitarian doctrine as usually asserted, no student of philosophy can seriously deny; and I do not see any *naïveté* in assuming the existence of an old and famous controversy.

When Dr. Hyslop goes on to speak of "capacity of choice between equal motives," the expression seems to me extremely ambig-

* It may, of course, be said that at least the social *impulse* (or rather germ of social feeling) must have pre-existed. But Professor Patten admits as much (by implication) when he speaks of social impulses as being "mere *adumbrations*" under circumstances that make societies unnecessary, but not as non-existent.

† A somewhat amusing instance of how the very same facts may be variously interpreted by ingenious minds is given in Professor Giddings's supposing that an amoeba does not devour a fellow amoeba, because, having learned the "feel" of its own substance, it has a similar "feel" when touching one of its fellows, and "recognizes the creature as an object like itself, and therefore as not food" (*Annals, etc.*, March, 1895, p. 101), while Professor Patten urges that the amoeba mistakes the other creature for *a part of itself*—in other words, that we have here "a case of mistaken identity due to a lack of development" (*Annals, etc.*, May, 1895, p. 119).